



## Partner Spotlight

### Keith Henderson – PECO Helper Program

YMWIC Scholars benefit greatly from our relationships with our Corporate Partners, both while they are in school and after they graduate and are employed. One such partnership is with PECO, specifically, the PECO Helper Program. Our Newsletter Editor, Robin Brown, recently spoke with Keith Henderson to find out more about him, his position within PECO, the PECO Helper Program, and his relationship with YMWIC.



Mr. Henderson has had a successful 37.5 year-long career in the energy sector. He recently earned his Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Certification from Cornell University through his participation in a program that taught Managers how to hire diverse talent. Along the way in his career at PECO, he has ascended in roles from Designer (of electrical feeds) at multiple sites, including the Philadelphia Convention Center; to Arial and Underground Supervisor (of staff who work on poles and in manholes); to his current role of Manager of PECO Technical Operations for their Workforce Development Team. As manager of this two-year old group, he said, “We are tasked with awareness and creating Infrastructure Academies for the community.”

Mr. Henderson became familiar with YMWIC through his PECO Helper Program colleague, Courtney Allen, who serves as Vice President of the YMWIC Board of Directors. He met with Rick Roberts and was impressed with the Foundation and using our partnership to help PECO to connect to the outlying counties of Philadelphia.

As a result of our partnership, several YMWIC alumni have been employed at PECO in their Pre-Apprenticeship Program, the PECO Helper Program. The YMWIC Alum currently in the PECO Helper Program are Damon Barr and Zachary Merritt. This Program offers entry-level positions in which employees with no experience and from underserved communities, are introduced to a myriad of job and career opportunities offered at PECO and within the energy sector. They are asked to commit for two years. Through mentorship and training, they are coached on how to take and pass necessary tests such as the Construction and Skilled Trade (CAST) and Assistant Mechanics Operator (AMO) tests, and how to interview successfully utilizing the STAR (Situation, Task, Action and Result) Method. The goal is that they will be ready in two years to be accepted into the PECO Apprenticeship Program and begin to navigate through the company to the position they would eventually like to hold.

Moving forward, Mr. Henderson would like to see the PECO partnership with YMWIC strengthen, provide opportunities to more Scholars and Alumni, expose them to what jobs are available in the energy sector, and offer them the opportunity to apply. He would also like to expand the Program to serve youth in more counties and would like YMWIC to assist in this effort. His advice to YMWIC Scholars is, “Be good at what you are doing now, and make an impact where you are. Keep your eyes on your next move. Don’t settle for where you are; continue to grow and learn, and make yourself known.”

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He is thankful for the opportunity to partner with YMWIC and expand to the counties outside of Philadelphia. Ultimately, he wants to give kids hope and guidance, introduce them to new opportunities, and to be an advocate they can trust.